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Hall, C.M., Timothy, D.J., & Duval, D.T. [Eds.] (2004) “Safety and Security in Tourism: relationships, management and marketing”, New York, The Haworth Hospitality Press, 340pp, £21.98

Having been co-published as Volume 15 Numbers 2-4 of the *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*, this book raises the thorny issue as to whether it should be judged as a handy pocket-version of that journal or as a stand-alone book. One has different expectations of, and aspirations for, each format; so, readers are likely to find their view of this text varying, accordingly.

The focus on ‘Safety and Security’ clouds judgement still further, since some readers are likely to see these as bound up within a wider hierarchy of risk perceptions, whereas others are more comfortable with seeing them as a discrete area.

The editors begin by reminding readers that ‘*security fears are not new to the world*’, but then proceed to discuss the ‘*New Security Agenda*’. Cogent though their arguments are, and the tourism sector does indeed need to be much more prepared for resource conflicts, the arguments seem to assume that we live in a world in which:

- the *Weather Underground* did not bomb the *Capitol* building, the *Pentagon* and a host of other targets; prompting the *FBI* leadership to launch illegal break-ins on suspected terrorists;
- the *QE2* cruise liner did not have to have a bomb disposal team parachuted onto it, after a ransom demand
- a man did not shoot a *Prime Minister* dead, within the *Houses of Parliament*.

Since we do live in that world, though, and since all these events happened decades ago, one is left wondering how much more the book could have offered if the editors had used their wealth of experience to illustrate how tourism’s experience in overcoming past challenges might help those who now feel that they are seeing such challenges for the very first time.

The chapters that follow provide the quality and depth of research one would expect from a leading journal and their discussion points are of a similar calibre, covering a wide range of topics and crises. As chapters within a book, though, one usually prefers to see a more cohesive thread of evidence and argument being developed. It is right that the detail of specific chapters is fairly narrow and follows the author’s aspirations, but setting their findings and conclusions against a contextual backcloth that might help explain, for instance, how the airline and hotel sectors had already been in decline long before the seismic events of September 2001 (van Marken, 2003) would have helped to set the findings of these chapters more easily into the wider debate. This was particularly noticeable when trying to transfer the findings of the chapter by McKercher & Hui [demonstrating a disparity between intentions and actual behaviour amongst their respondents], to the trends seen in comparable tourism data.

The chapter on “*Freud, Tourism, and Terror*” is one of those that goes some way to ensure that its theoretical background is well laid out, noting some very useful precursors in the literature before going on to approach and explore the topic from an intriguing perspective – one rarely found in comparable books.

For readers of *IT&T*, the debate over whether future security is likely to come from biometrics and databases, or from highly-trained and alert staff, is likely to be of keen interest. Several chapters allude to this issue, or cross over it, but a surprising number seem to trot out the well-worn belief that terrorism will come from ‘across a border’ and that passport checks will keep it out; something that *IT&T* readers might have preferred to see explored in more critical detail. Similarly, several chapter authors note the frequency with which precursor events had failed to result in any effective level of planning or awareness being in place when a crisis occurred; few, though, seem to draw much upon the *Systems* or *Knowledge Management* literature in their evaluations of why this was – though one chapter does seek to go “*Beyond the Rhetoric*” of crisis management.

As already mentioned, whether *IT&T* readers are likely to find this book worthy of purchase depends upon whether they are seeking a bound version of the journal, or a book that delivers a coherent and incisive argument. The editors and authors have done well to provide such an accessible and engaging volume, on an undoubtedly critical topic - few readers would not benefit from at least something within this book. The critical insights and detailed approaches found in the literature of surrounding disciplines, though, may provide better value for money for those seeking effective solutions to current challenges.

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van Marken, N. 2003 Presentation to the “15th Annual European Hotel Investment Conference”.
Available:
<http://www.deloitte.co.uk/industries/ttl/aehic/docs/european%20market%20and%20investment%20review.ppt>
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